

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL IZMIR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1889

INFO AMCONSUL ADANA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA TK

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL NICOSIA

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: ETRD, GR, TU

SUBJECT: VISIT OF AEGEAN CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY TO ATHENS

REF: IZMIR 202 (NOTAL), ATHENS 6663

1. REFTELS REPORT VISIT OF IZMIR BASED AEGEAN CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY GROUP TO MEET WITH MEMBERS OF ATHENS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY JULY 11-13. AT END OF VISIT, JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED (SEE ATHENS REFTEL) STATING DESIRE FOR

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INCREASED COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND NOTING PROPOSED FORMATION OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY JOINT PROJECTS. IN ADDITION TO SEVERAL SHORT PRESS RELEASES, YILMAZ ADIGUZEL, PRESIDENT OF AEGEAN CHAMBER, HELD PRESS CONFERENCE ON JULY 19 AND OFFICIALLY RELEASED JOINT COMMUNIQUE FROM ATHENS VISIT TO PRESS. (SEE ATHENS REFTEL).

2. POST OFFICER, IN SEPARATE MEETINGS ON JULY 20, DISCUSSED VISIT WITH BOTH ADIGUZEL AND SAMIM TURGAY, SECRETARY-GENERAL

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OF AEGEAN CHAMBER. TURGAY NOTED THAT GOT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAD "STRONGLY ENCOURAGED" CHAMBER'S VISIT BUT RECEPTION IN ATHENS FROM BUSINESSMEN WAS INITIALLY COOL WITH LITTLE EVIDENCE OF ANY GOG ENTHUSIASM. HE ASSERTED, HOWEVA, THAT GREEK BUSINESSMEN BECAME INCREASINGLY INTERESTED AS MEETINGS PROGRESSED.

3. TURGAY SAID POSSIBLE JOINT VENTURES OR EXCHANGE OF TECH-

NICAL INFORMATION DISCUSSED, MOST HOPEFUL BEING COOPERATION IN TEXTILES, CEMENT PRODUCTION AND TOURISM. HE ADMITTED THAT WITH "CURRENT STATE OF TURKISH-GREEK RELATION", GREEKS WERE "NERVOUS" ABOUT INVESTING IN JOINT PROJECTS. DATE MENTIONED BY IZMIR PRESS FOR RECIPROCAL GREEK CHAMBER VISIT TO IZMIR

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(SEPT. 18) DENIED BY TURGAY WHO STATED ARRANGEMENTS NOT FINAL AND "VSEES SEEMED AFRAID TO COME TO TURKEY" (HURGAY STRONGLY IMPLIED VISIT MIGHT BE CANCELED).

4. SUBJECT OF EARLIER AEGEAN CHAMBER VISIT TO TURKISH CYPRUS (SS IZMIR A-33, NOTAL) RAISED BY TURGAY WHO VOICED HOPE THAT AEGEAN CHAMBER MIGHT "SERVE AS A BRIDGE" BETWEEN ATHENS AND TURKISH CYPRUS THROUGH "BUSINESS COOPERATION". BOTH ADIGUZEL AND TURGAY EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PRIVATE SECTORS OF GREECE AND TURKEY MIGHT HELP IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS ON WHICH POLITICIANS SEEMED UNABLE MAKE HEADWAY. ADIGUZEL ASSERTED INITIATIVE FOR COOPERATION "HAD TO COME" FROM TURKISH BUSINESSMEN.

5. BOTH MEN EMPHASIZED POINT THAT NO DEFINITE COMMITMENTS FOR JOINT PROJECTS WERE MADE AND MAIN PURPOSE WAS ESTABLISH AND IMPROVE COMMUNITATIONS BETWEEN TWO PRIVATE SECTORS. PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECT NOT IGNORED AS TURGAY REQUESTED POST HELP IN SENDING JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND INFORMATION ON VISIT TO AMERICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MEDIA. TURKISH GROUP HIGHLY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT POTENTIAL FOR COOPERATION BUT MAJOR BARRIERS OF GREEK PRIVATE SECTOR'S RELUCTANCE AND SUSPICION PLUS WHOLE SPECTRUM OF GREEK-

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TURKISH TENSIONS (CYPRUS, AEGEAN AIR SPACE AND MINERAL RIGHTS, ETC.) POSE FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES.

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